

Head, Clara & Maria Policies and Procedures			
DEPARTMENT: Administration			POLICY #: A-05
POLICY NAME: Accountability and Transparency			
DATE: April 2009	REV. DATE: October 2023	APPROVED BY: Council	PAGE #: 5 of 6

POLICY STATMENT

The Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good governance with respect to matters within its jurisdiction in an accountable and transparent manner by:

Encouraging and facilitating public access to information about the Municipality's services, programs and encouraging public participation to ensure that business is conducted openly and decision-making is responsive to the needs of the stakeholders and receptive to their opinions;

Delivering high quality services to residents and businesses and actively seeking input for enhancing service delivery and achieving best policies.

Promoting the efficient and effective use of public resources and permitting stakeholders the opportunity to evaluate the Municipality's performance in this regard.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the municipality adopting measures, ensuring to the best of its ability that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to its stakeholders. In addition, wherever possible, the Municipality will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision-making process which will be open, visible, and transparent to the public.

PURPOSE

Section 270(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 (the Act) requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the municipality's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein.

DEFINITIONS

"Accountability" is the principle that the municipality will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.

"Transparency" is the principle that the municipality actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision-making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the municipality's decision-making process is open and clear to the public.

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GENERAL PROVISIONS

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They can be achieved in part through the municipality adopting measures ensuring, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to its stakeholders.

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision-making and, with necessary modification, to the administrative management of the municipality.

1. Financial Matters

The municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. The Municipality demonstrates such accountability and transparency through the following polices/procedures:

- i. External Audit
- ii. Financial Reporting/Statements
- iii. Long Range Financial Planning
- iv. Annual Financial Statements
- v. Asset Management
- vi. Purchasing/Procurement Policy
- vii. Sale of Land and Other Assets
- viii. Budget Process
- ix. Signing Authority By-law
- x. Fees and Charges By-law

2. Internal Governance

The municipality's administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees through the following initiatives:

- i. Code of Conduct for Municipal Employees
- ii. Code of Conduct for Members of Council
- iii. Confidentiality Statement
- iv. Performance Management and Evaluation
- v. Hiring Policy
- vi. Orientation and Support of Continuing Education
- vii. Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
- viii. Workplace Harassment and Violence Policies
- ix. Fair Compensation and Benefits with Annual Review

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3. Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Municipality ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings will take place (Procedural By-law). The Municipality's meetings will be open to the public when and as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments verbally or in writing on specific items at these meetings provided that established protocols are followed. In addition, the municipality has adopted policies, which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including:

- i. Procedural By-law
- ii. Public Distribution of Council and Committee Agenda and Meeting Documentation
- iii. Code of Conduct for Councillors
- iv. Strategic Plan
- v. Public Notice By-law
- vi. Delegation of Authority By-law
- vii. Planning Processes Pursuant to the Planning Act
- viii. Complaint Process
- ix. Delegation Rules
- x. Records Retention By-law
- xi. Freedom of Information Process
- xii. Investigator/Ombudsman Appointed
- xiii. Auditor entitled to attend any meeting of Council, Committee, or Local Board

RESPONSIBILITY

The Clerk and Council shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

REVIEW

Council shall review this policy once per term.